

Despite drastic reductions in resources and personnel over the last several years, the result of government downsizing and shrinking budgets, the Coast Guard has admirably maintained a high level of service. The Coast Guard has met the challenges of a growing number of missions while continuously improving performance in its existing mission areas of law enforcement, maritime safety, marine environmental protection, and national security. With personal strength at the lowest level since 1967, and the smallest fleet of aircraft and seagoing cutters since 1989, the men and women of the Coast Guard continue to provide outstanding service to our nation. Since 1992, the number of fisheries boarding conducted by Coast Guard personnel has increased by 62%. Since 1983, the number of undocumented migrants interdicted by the Coast Guard has grown by 635%. Last year, arrests of cocaine traffickers were up 1000%, and cocaine seizures were triple the previous year. Through these incredible interdiction efforts, the Coast Guard kept more than 468 million cocaine "hits" and 100 million marijuana "joints" off American streets last year. The estimated street value of these seizures is more than \$4.2 billion—\$1 billion more than the Coast Guard's entire 1997 discretionary budget.

The return on investment provided to the American taxpayer by the Coast Guard is not unique to its drug enforcement mission. In the area of Search and Rescue alone, the Coast Guard provided the American public with a 4-to-1 return on investment last year represented by 5,000 lives saved and 65,000 persons assisted. Further, Coast Guard prevention efforts have contributed to a 50% reduction in major oil spills over the past 10 years and a 43% decline in recreational boating deaths since 1970.

Mr. President, many in this country have no knowledge of the U.S. Coast Guard. Many do not realize the Coast Guard operates throughout the world and, in addition to its many other missions, is this nation's fifth armed service. Many do not realize that the U.S. Coast Guard participated extensively in the Persian Gulf War and, in fact, still has personnel in the Persian Gulf enforcing the embargo against Iraq, as well as in other "hot spots" around the world. Coast Guard cutters, aircraft and personnel routinely deploy throughout the world in support of Coast Guard missions ranging from search and rescue, law enforcement, and environmental protection to ice breaking, port security, and vessel safety.

Mr. President, the U.S. Coast Guard is an agency in which the U.S. should invest, not divest. This bill authorizes adequate funding and includes other provisions to allow the Coast Guard to continue to carry out its important work. For these reasons, I urge the passage of this important measure.●

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have serious objections to a provision in the

Coast Guard authorization bill that was inserted in the House bill in a managers amendment with no hearings or vote in the Senate. This provision grants a waiver of existing law for a single vessel operating on the Great Lakes and elsewhere against the wishes of both Michigan Senators and other Senators and in circumvention of a Customs Service ruling regarding the type of dredge work this vessel is allowed to perform.

This waiver is a discriminatory provision which gives special treatment and a competitive advantage to one vessel at the expense of its competitors.

Mr. President, the granting of this waiver will be detrimental to other dredgers on the Great Lakes and elsewhere who are abiding by U.S. law and U.S. Customs Service interpretations of the Jones Act. The hopper dredge vessel *Columbus*, the vessel seeking the waiver, was challenged by a competitor for violating the Jones Act because it was performing dredging work that was not allowed under that Act. That challenge was upheld by the U.S. Customs Service. However, instead of abiding by or appealing the Customs Service ruling, a legislative waiver was sought to circumvent that ruling. The waiver was granted by the House, but not the Senate because the Senate passed Coast Guard authorization bill did not contain this discriminatory provision.

I want to make clear that the only reason this waiver will be included in the final Coast Guard authorization bill is due to the circumstances under which this bill is being considered. Under normal circumstances, I believe the Senate would have removed this provision from the final bill.

Next year I will introduce legislation to repeal the Jones Act waiver that is contained in the Coast Guard authorization bill, H.R. 2204, for the vessel *Columbus*. Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that you and Senator SNOWE will work with me to repeal this waiver as early as possible next year.

Ms. SNOWE. I recognize the concerns of the senior Senator from Michigan about this waiver. I will work with you to repeal the Jones Act waiver for the vessel *Columbus*.

Mr. MCCAIN. I also recognize the Senator's concerns and I will work with the Senator from Michigan to find a solution that eliminates an unfair competitive disadvantage when the Commerce Committee considers the legislation as early as possible next year. This is a complex issue and I am sure that the Senator from Michigan would agree that fairness to all parties involved must be taken into account in addressing it. I would also like to address the broader issue of what type of dredging should be conducted on the Great Lakes so there is clarification on this issue in the future.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate agree to the amendment of the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand most all of the legislative and Executive Calendar items that can be cleared have been considered by the Senate. We are still working on some of the nominations for clearance. I thank all of my colleagues for their cooperation in the 105th Congress. I hope they have a good campaign season and period at home with their constituents and that we can work together on some very important issues in the 106th Congress.

We will have the final close in a few moments, but I understand there are at least one or two Senators who will have statements before we get to that.

Once again, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE RICKY RAY BILL

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, first let me thank the majority leader for the passage of the Ricky Ray bill, which just occurred a few moments ago. This is a bill that I introduced, along with Senator BOB GRAHAM, here in the Senate. It was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative TAUZIN. It has certainly been worked on and helped immensely by Speaker GINGRICH, by Congressman HYDE and by Senator JEFFORDS. It is a bill which I believe will do some justice in regard to a great tragedy. It is a great tragedy that has afflicted thousands and thousands of Americans through literally no fault of their own. These are hemophiliacs who received tainted blood. Many of them have died as a result of that. Many of them are suffering today, and their families are suffering. They have tremendous expenses. They have the normal expenses of being hemophiliac and on top of that they now have AIDS. The reason for this bill is to correct this injustice. The injustice was that the Federal Government was simply not vigilant, did not do what it should have done to protect the precious blood supply of this country.

Those of us who have worked on this bill for the last several years, I think, have felt this was not just another bill in the Congress. We have seen and we have talked firsthand to the families who have suffered. I met in my office with a man from Ohio whose son died. His son died because of this tainted blood. As the father, one of the caregivers of this child who had hemophilia, he was the one who had to administer the blood. To talk to this father, with tears in his eyes, in my office, was something I will never forget. This bill will not bring his son back. It will not bring back those who have died. But what it will do for those families is give them some compensation,

some help to deal with their medical expenses. Equally important, it will be a very clear signal to them and to the country that when a mistake is made, when the Government does not do what it should do, when people suffer as they have suffered, that justice will be done. This bill is about justice.

It is now on its way to the President. Again, I thank all of those who have been involved in this: Senator LOTT, Senator JEFFORDS, Congressman HYDE, Senator BOB GRAHAM, PORTER GOSS in the House, the prime sponsor in the House, as well as Speaker GINGRICH.

DRUG INTERDICTION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I will now take a moment to discuss one of the most important accomplishments of this Congress. It is an accomplishment that occurred about 4½ hours ago. Back in July, I, along with a bipartisan, bicameral core group of legislators, came to the floor and introduced a bill that called for a major new effort to restore a balance to our drug interdiction and eradication efforts. Today, just this morning, after a few short months, this important effort has been included in the omnibus bill that we passed. It is included in the bill that is being sent to the President and that, with his signature, will then become law.

This bill, this effort, is about restoring balance to America's antidrug efforts. Restoring balance to America's antidrug effort is a major accomplishment of this Congress. It is vitally important to the future of America's children. Our drug interdiction efforts, keeping drugs out of this country, are lagging way behind where they ought to be. Drugs are far too plentiful, far too easy to find, far too cheap, far too easy to obtain. It is so easy. The amount of drugs in our country is at an unprecedented high level.

Back in the 1980s and 1990s we used to have a balanced antidrug strategy. We provided the right balance of resources to fight drugs. What do I mean by balance? I think we have to take a multifaceted approach to the drug problem. We have to have treatment for those who need that and who are willing to go into treatment. We have to have education and other methods to stop people from starting drugs. We have to have domestic law enforcement, most of which is handled at the local level but, of course, it also includes the DEA and the FBI. And, we also have to have international drug interdiction, stopping drugs from leaving the source countries—Peru, Bolivia and Colombia—stopping them on the high seas, stopping them at the border. We have to have all four components. What this bill does is restores that balance, or a better way of saying it, frankly, a more accurate way of saying it, is it begins to restore this balance.

This effort is not just about providing resources. It is demonstrating, rather, the will to stop drugs before

they reach our borders. This is not just about dollars. It is not just about dollars and cents. It is also about leadership. It is the Federal Government's—our—responsibility, and the Federal Government's alone to stop drugs at the source or in transit to our borders. In the other areas, where we talk about treatment, or domestic law enforcement, prevention, education, all of these are shared responsibilities of the local communities and the State and the Federal Government and the private sector and the nonprofit groups. But when we talk about drug interdiction, that is the one thing that nobody else can do but the Federal Government. That is our responsibility and the buck does, in fact, stop here.

It is the Federal Government's responsibility, and the Federal Government's alone, to stop drugs at the source or in transit to our borders. I have seen it firsthand. I have been to the Caribbean. I have been to the Bahamas, I have been off the coast of Haiti and off the coast of the Dominican Republic. I have been along the border in El Paso. I have been into New Mexico. I have talked directly to the men and women of this great country who are fighting this war. We have great people who are doing that. I have seen firsthand that what we are currently providing to uphold this responsibility is simply not enough. It is, frankly, inadequate. Just as we need military readiness to defend America against war, we need drug interdiction readiness to defend America against drugs.

We do know how to do it. We do know how to do it. We have great people. We got our ideas for this legislation from the experts, from men and women of key agencies such as the Coast Guard, Customs, DEA. That is where the ideas for this legislation that will now become law came from. Their resources have been dramatically reduced, tragically, in recent years. This bill begins—and I say begins—to fix this problem by providing the very resources they need. We could not be here today without their assistance.

This was a bipartisan effort. We worked with both sides of the aisle. We had Gen. Barry McCaffrey's involvement and his help and cooperation and assistance. Today we certainly can be proud of this victory, but today is just the first step. We have a long way to go to restore this balance. We will be back next year to continue this war. But make no mistake about it, this bill is a major step towards keeping drugs out of our country. This bill will mean more planes in the air, more ships at sea, less drugs on the streets of America. We are back in the business of putting the drug lords out of business.

I thank my good friend, BILL MCCOLLUM, Congressman MCCOLLUM from Florida, for leading this effort in the House of Representatives. I thank DENNY HASTERT, chairman of the Speaker's drug task force, who did a remarkable job in securing close to \$700 million to get this initiative started. I

also thank our bipartisan core group on drug interdiction—Senators PAUL COVERDELL, BOB GRAHAM, AL D'AMATO, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, LAUCH FAIRCLOTH, and of course PORTER GOSS, CHUCK GRASSLEY and KIT BOND.

The Speaker of the House, NEWT GINGRICH, and Majority Leader TRENT LOTT, both were absolutely instrumental in getting this included in the budget package that we just passed. But for them it simply would not have happened, and we know that.

The two chairmen of the Appropriations Committees, Senator TED STEVENS and Congressman BOB LIVINGSTON, deserve our thanks for taking the lead to include our initiative in their omnibus bill.

This legislation will make a huge difference in our efforts to win back America's future from the drug lords. It is just the beginning to restore the balance but it is a major, significant beginning. It is a major victory. I thank my colleagues who worked so very hard on this.

AFRICA: SEEDS OF HOPE ACT

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I would like now to turn the Senate's attention to a very important foreign policy, as well as humanitarian, measure, a measure that has also been passed by the Congress. I am referring to the Africa: Seeds of Hope Act.

Back in July, Senator SARBANES and I introduced legislation on the Senate floor to promote small-scale agricultural and rural development in Africa, a bill cosponsored in the House of Representatives by our colleagues, DOUG BEREUTER and LEE HAMILTON, a bipartisan effort, a bill that will save lives, a bill that will help people help themselves.

The Africa: Seeds of Hope Act represents a commitment to seek ways to help farmers in sub-Saharan Africa through sustainable agriculture, research, rural finance and extension projects. The bill will also recognize important benefits such overseas agricultural advances could hold for America's farmers. The Senate and House have both passed the bill. It is now on its way to the President.

We need to sow seeds of hope in Africa. There are a vast number of people in Africa who go each day without the necessary nourishment that we in our country take for granted. In many parts of Africa, women and children struggle daily to find the food that will barely sustain them for another day.

The problem in Africa has worsened over the last 30 years, and this is in spite of the fact that in many parts of the world the situation is getting better, and in Africa it is getting worse. The number of Africans who are unable to produce the food and provisions they need to lead healthy, productive lives is tragically rising. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, around 215 million people are undernourished in sub-Saharan Africa, and